

# DNREC and Fort Miles Historical Association to commemorate 72nd anniversary of V-J Day at Cape Henlopen State Park



*One the famed 16-inch guns from USS Missouri when the Japanese surrender was signed aboard the battleship – being fitted into its permanent emplacement at Fort Miles' Artillery Park in 2016. The big gun has been refurbished and is a centerpiece of Artillery Park at the Fort Museum, where a ceremony will be held Saturday commemorating the 72nd anniversary of V-J Day which brought World War II to an end.*

**LEWES** – On Saturday, Sept. 2, DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin will join with the Fort Miles Historical Association for a commemorative ceremony marking the 72nd anniversary of V-J

Day, when the Japanese surrendered on board the U.S.S. Missouri, which ended World War II. The ceremony will be held at the Fort Miles Museum, which is located in DNREC's Cape Henlopen State Park, beginning at 11 a.m. The Fort Miles Historical Association and DNREC's Delaware State Parks have partnered in the effort to restore Fort Miles since 2003. The ceremony will be held in the shadow of one of the big guns that was mounted on the "Mighty Mo" when the surrender took place, and which was put in place at the museum in 2016.

"We are proud to serve as host to this commemoration of V-J Day, as we honor the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to secure our freedom during WWII," said DNREC Secretary Garvin. "The dedication of the volunteers of the Fort Miles Historical Association reminds us of the country's 'Greatest Generation' that manned Fort Miles and protected Delaware's coast during WWII. We have been pleased to partner with the Fort Miles Historical Association for more than a decade to make the Fort Miles Museum the best of its kind in the nation, and will continue this successful partnership in the future to further restore this historic treasure."

DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation and the Fort Miles Historical Association worked together in 2012 to secure one of the three remaining 16" gun barrels from the battleship Missouri that were aboard on Sept. 2, 1945 when the Japanese surrendered. The gun was refurbished and placed in the FMHA's Artillery Park in 2016.

"On Sept. 2, 1945, the 11-member Japanese delegation boarded the U.S.S. Missouri, walked past our big gun and then stood in front of the Allied delegation to surrender and end WWII," said Dr. Gary Wray, president of the FMHA. "As this barrel was witness to the surrender that ended the war, the FMHA holds a ceremonial event to honor that day and the ultimate sacrifice made by hundreds of thousands of American soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen to secure the nation's freedom. The ceremony also honors the nearly 900 Delaware men and women who

were killed in the war.”

Honored during the ceremony will be the FMHA members who have passed away during 2017. The ceremony will take place underneath the shadow of the Missouri barrel that was actually at one of the most famous end of the war ceremonies in history overlooking the beautiful Delaware coast in Cape Henlopen State Park. The FMHA honors both the gun barrel and its service in WWII, the country’s men and women who made the maximum sacrifice in WWII, and the fallen FMHA members over the last year in this ceremony each year.

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